



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 625

January Session, 2001

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1224

Senate, May 7, 2001

The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. CRISCO of the 17th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
PROGRAM FOR UNDERSERVED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (a) The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services of the
- 2 Department of Social Services may receive state and federal funds to
- 3 administer, within available appropriations, an employment
- 4 opportunities program to serve individuals with the most significant
- 5 disabilities who do not meet the eligibility requirements of supported
- 6 employment programs administered by the Departments of Mental
- 7 Retardation and Mental Health and Addiction Services. For the
- 8 purposes of this section, "individuals with the most significant
- 9 disabilities" means those individuals who (1) have serious employment
- 10 limitations in a total of three or more functional areas including, but
- 11 not limited to, mobility, communication, self-care, interpersonal skills,
- 12 work tolerance or work skills, or (2) will require significant ongoing
- 13 disability-related services on the job in order to maintain employment.

14 (b) The employment opportunities program shall provide extended
15 services, as defined in 34 CFR 361.5(b)(19), that are necessary for
16 individuals with the most significant disabilities to maintain supported
17 employment. Such services shall include coaching and other related
18 services that allow participants to obtain and maintain employment
19 and maximize economic self-sufficiency.

20 (c) The Department of Social Services shall adopt regulations, in
21 accordance with chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the
22 provisions of this section.

23 Sec. 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In subsection (b) of section 1, the CFR reference was corrected for accuracy.

HS *Joint Favorable C/R*

APP

APP *Joint Favorable Subst.-LCO*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Affected Agencies: Department of Social Services

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation**State Impact:**

This bill allows the Department of Social Services to receive state or federal funds in order to administer an employment opportunities program that will serve individuals with significant disabilities who are ineligible for services from the Department of Mental Retardation or the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. The program is to be administered within available appropriations. As this bill formalizes a current practice of the department, no fiscal impact is anticipated.

OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 1224

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM FOR UNDER-SERVED INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.**SUMMARY:**

This bill authorizes the Department of Social Services' (DSS) Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) to receive state and federal funds to run, within available appropriations, an employment opportunities program for severely disabled people who do not qualify for the departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) or Mental Retardation (DMR) supported employment programs (e.g., people with traumatic brain injury or severe learning disabilities). The program must include supports that help individuals to remain working, and DSS must adopt implementing regulations. (In practice, BRS has run this program for several years.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2001

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM***Who is Eligible***

The program must serve people with the most significant disabilities. Only those who (1) have serious employment limitations in three or more functional areas, such as mobility, communication, self-care, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills or (2) will need significant ongoing on-the-job disability-related services to keep their jobs can qualify.

"Extended" Services

The program must provide "extended" services needed to help the clients maintain supported employment, as defined in federal regulations. The regulations define these as ongoing support services

and other appropriate services that are (1) needed to support and maintain an individual with a most severe disability in supported employment and (2) provided by a state agency, private nonprofit entity, employers, or any other appropriate resource once the individual has made the transition from the vocational rehabilitation support that the state rehabilitation services agency provides.

The bill requires these services to include coaching and other related services that allow participants to find and keep jobs and maximize economic self-sufficiency.

BACKGROUND

BRS Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Supported Employment

BRS currently provides vocational rehabilitative services to people with disabilities to enable them to enter the workforce. State law defines these services as any goods or services needed to render a disabled person employable. The services include assessments for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs, rehabilitation technology, job development, placement, and retention services, extended employment, and language therapy. These services are time-limited.

BRS also provides ongoing support services for people who have significant disabilities, but who do not qualify for DMR or DMHAS supported employment services, to maintain employment in the community, rather than in sheltered workshops or other congregate settings. While some of these individuals may have more than one disability, their primary diagnosis is not mental retardation or mental illness.

Both federal and state funds support these services.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference

Yea 14 Nay 0

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 47 Nay 0